

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rep. Hong Applauds Signing of Bill Designating May 14 as Hmong-Lao Veterans Day

Madison - Today, Gov. Tony Evers signed Assembly Bill 154, now Wisconsin Act 31, designating May 14 as Hmong-Lao Veterans Day in Wisconsin.

Representative Hong (D-76) released the following statement:

“It is incredible that Hmong fighters in Laos risked their lives for a country they did not know during the Vietnam war and showed incalculable bravery under extraordinary duress.

The recognition of Hmong-Lao Veterans day is therefore a debt that has been owed and one we must honor as patriots. For over 20 years, bills to the likeness of 2021 Wisconsin Act 31 have stalled in the legislature; obstructed by a legislative process that did not assign adequate importance to the recognition of Wisconsin’s Hmong-Lao Veterans. I extend a sincere thank you to my colleagues in the Assembly and Senate for seeing this bill through at such an important time.

We must all acknowledge that the history of the Hmong people in Wisconsin is inextricably tied to the story of Wisconsin. Not only are these Veterans pillars of their communities here in this state, but they have contributed to the fabric of Wisconsin twice-fold; first as soldiers and then as refugees.

Their story has been of hardships, including language barriers, ostracization, and alienation. But their story continues to be one of perseverance and humility. Indeed that humility has historically been utilized by society to erase the Hmong American experience and voice — and we cannot let that happen any longer. We must signal, as a legislative body, that we are not only proud to be their fellow countrymen, but that we will protect them as they have protected us.”

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